

## EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE.

Nashville, Tenn.

For many years I had promised myself the pleasure of a visit to the "Hermitage," the old country home of Andrew Jackson, but had always put off the visit until "next time." Last week a dear friend offered to take us out to the "Hermitage" in his automobile. So we started one fine November afternoon. As we swept down the much traveled "Lebanon Pike," we passed many vehicles coming into the city from the country. One pathetic group we shall not soon forget, a family moving on foot, the father carrying a well grown youth on his shoulders, the mother with her babe on her breast, and children of several sizes trudging on beside their parents. They all looked weary with their journey, and if we had had room I would have asked them to get in and ride with us, but our automobile was full. So we passed on down the road, leaving the family party to make their way as best they could.

The scene carried us back to old colonial times long ago, when struggling on from the far East many settlers came to subdue the Western wilderness. There were Indians in those days, and many a party like those we had seen were attacked and killed and scalped, their poor bodies left by the wayside to decay.

Splendid was the autumnal foliage beside the road, and fine fields of cut corn stalks told us that a fine crop had rewarded the farmers' industry of the season.

"Clover Bottom" farm, which we passed, was a paradise of fertility. This has been a farm bearing its present name since the days of "Old Hickory."

At length, about twelve miles out, we hauled up in front of a small brick church, the one Jackson built for his wife, Rachael, to worship in. About a mile to the east we came to the great old colonial residence called "The Hermitage." You approach it through a long avenue of cedars, very tall and ancient looking, evidently planted by old Jackson in his day. This approach lies in the lines of a great guitar, at the foot of which stands the grand old house. They told me that old Jackson was an accomplished player on several kinds of instruments, something I had never heard of before. The house is of brick, on heavy stone foundations, with six great pillars in front, standing up two stories high. Behind these is a stone paved portico. Passing through this we find ourselves in a great central hall, with a stairway-carpeted with Brussels, which is an old carpet of the Jackson time. The walls of this hall are covered with pictured paper ordered from Paris, containing scenes from the life of Telemachus and Ulysses.

The parlor is preserved with its ancient mahogany furniture, and paintings on the walls. Mrs. Jackson's bedroom is opposite the parlor, and across the hall old Jackson's sleeping room, with a high old-fashioned mahogany bed, beside which stood a short ladder, affording access to it from the floor.

Next to this is the old hero's study, with its bookcases and writing tables. In all of the rooms are relics of the early days and many interesting things connected with the life of the family. Among other objects is Jackson's old sword and a pair of pistols. We wondered if one of these was used by Jackson in his duel with Dickenson, whom he killed for an insulting remark about Mrs. Jackson. It is well known that when Jackson married her she was still the wife of another man, though he and she thought that she had been divorced from her first husband. After they found out the truth they were married again, and

the old man was passionately and romantically attached to his wife as long as she lived.

The kitchen has the old time kitchen furniture. An ancient crane with a pot hanging over the hearth, and pots setting about as if a dinner were just about to be cooked for the family.

In a house in the yard stands the old family carriage, a gigantic structure, with a flight of steps by which it was reached. In this old carriage Jackson traveled between his home and Washington.

There is a fine garden, in one corner of which lie the ashes of General Jackson and his wife, also the bodies of their adopted son, Andrew Jackson, and members of his family. A tall marble shaft stands over the resting place of the great man and his beloved Rachael. Here lies the man of blood and iron, who knew how to hate and to love as well as any man of his generation. The terrible soldier who subdued the hostile Indians in several wars, and who whipped the seasoned British at New Orleans with his "backwoods rabble" of soldiers from Kentucky and Tennessee. These backwoods men were as fine soldiers as ever handled musket and sword, being brought up from infancy to use fire arms in hunting and in defending their homes from the attacks of savages. The victory of New Orleans, though it was achieved after peace had been signed, was one of the most important in the history of the nation, because it confirmed the nation in possession of the Louisiana territory, which the United States had purchased from Napoleon Bonaparte. This great victory made Jackson the national idol, and gave him the presidency of the United States for two terms.

A dear old friend of mine told me after my visit to "The Hermitage" of Jackson's conversion in his old age.

The death of Mrs. Jackson was an awful blow to the old man, and turned his thoughts towards God. He had been profane and a regular though not intemperate drinker, but some time after her decease Dr. Edgar, pastor of the First Presbyterian church of Nashville, preached on a Saturday in the little old church a sermon preparatory to the communion. In his sermon Dr. Edgar spoke earnestly of the necessity of forgiveness to a man becoming a Christian. He must forgive his enemies or God would not forgive him. After the service Jackson asked Dr. Edgar to go home as his guest. On the way as they walked old Jackson referred to the sermon and asked the preacher if there could be no exceptions to the rule he had laid down in his sermon. The old doctor told him, "No, there can be no exceptions." Jackson said, "Well, I have two classes of enemies—political enemies I think I can forgive them, but the men who have spoken against my wife I can never forgive." The minister told him he must also forgive them if he hoped that God would forgive him. The old man groaned and stood with bowed head. He asked Dr. Edgar to kneel down beside a log and ask God's help in his behalf. They did pray, and Dr. Edgar begged God to enable his friend to forgive all his enemies. When they arose the old hero said, "Doctor, I feel that I can do it. I fully forgive them all," and the light of the divine life shone from the old man's eyes. The next day Jackson was received into the church, and partook of the holy communion. From that hour onward he was a changed man. He became gentle, patient and humble. It was because the miracle of conversion had occurred in his soul. In other words, he was born again in the image of him who when dying said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

R. P. K.

## A REAL THANKSGIVING.

It is no mere formal or political thing for the chief magistrate of our favored nation to call us together to thank and praise the Giver of every good and perfect gift.

This nation recognizes God in our national life. Whatever our creed or origin, the hand of God is so manifest that the most thoughtless must turn aside to acknowledge Him.

The year past has shaken the old world from center to circumference. More history has been made in these twelve months than in any year since Christ died on the cross. And the end is not yet. One English statesman has prophesied that the outcome will be "revolution or anarchy." Yet how tranquil and calm has our national life been. In spite of efforts of men and governments to entangle us in this maelstrom of war, we have been guided to an honorable and happy settlement of all our foreign difficulties.

What splendid tokens of good are resting on our cities and country. The smoke of our factories is writing "prosperity" across the open heavens. The abounding harvests have spelled "plenty" over our plains and hills. There is no breaking forth or rushing in. Peace and plenty are found everywhere.

No pestilence has stalked abroad. No terror has assailed us by night. Along our northern border, not a gun, nor a fort is found. One hundred years of peace and good will have cemented these nations. Along our southern lines, the disturbances of poor, priest-ridden and ignorant Mexico are subsiding. On the east and west, our seas carry no hostile fleets.

Surely, if ever a people had occasion to praise God, we have. What kind of Thanksgiving shall it be? Certainly it ought to be one that God approves.

We ought definitely to recognize God as the giver of these blessings. The day is often so crowded with social pleasures, or even business, with hunting and football, that we forget that the house of God is open. Surely we should not forget to actually thank God.

It ought to be the happy occasion when we bury old difficulties and, in the spirit of Christ, make up our differences. On the full tide of happiness, we ought to float off the mudbanks of envy and hatred. There may be some one whom we dislike; this is the day to win them by an act of kindness.

It is the day of days when we ought to cheer and help those who are not so blessed in this world's goods as we. Many are in darkness and loneliness. The very happiness of others accentuates the gloom of their own hearts. Can we not carry a measure of our gladness to them?

Many are facing the bitter winter without protection against its blasts, and food and fuel for the body. Is it not a privilege to have our thanks to God take the turn of helping God's children and sharing with them the things He has so bountifully bestowed on us? It is not always easy to help the deserving, but this is one occasion when we can.

It is peculiarly the day when we remember the fatherless ones. We come to thank Him as our Father, as the One who has remembered our constantly recurring wants. How can we do it better than to be the agents of His bounty to those who are His peculiar care, the orphans in and out of our Homes? We might almost support our Orphans' Homes with the proceeds of the day, if we would but make the effort. Every Synod has an Orphans' Home. Many orders have them; we have abundant opportunity to remember those helpless ones. Is it possible to think of a more real and pleasing Thanksgiving to our Father in heaven than this?

A. A. L.